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EDITORIAL.

In the United Kingdom, all the Government can expect is to enjoy two consecutive terms of office. In Canada, a party turned out in less than a quarter of a century would consider itself harshly dealt with.

The severest argument against horse-racing we have ever heard is the claim that it requires gambling to maintain it. Is racing, then, or is gambling, the "sport of kings"? We have no serious objection to racing, properly conducted; but if it cannot exist without the colossal abuse of gambling, good-bye to both. The character of our people is above the improvement—if it be improvement—of our horseflesh.

There can be no manner of doubt that the pooling of cheese-factory proceeds is steadily increasing the amount of milk required to make a pound of cheese. At the Western Dairymen's Convention, retiring President Parsons told how their amount had been lowered from $\frac{1}{2}$ to $\frac{3}{4}$ of a pound of milk per pound of cheese in one season as a result of paying according to the system, "per cent. of fat, plus two." This is the fairest plan yet devised, and equity is the surest basis of progress.

A Montreal paper, seeking to make out a case for racing as a means of improving the courage, speed and stamina of Thoroughbred horses useful in the breeding of cavalry mounts, says: "The eyes of those who look upon racing as a pastime have been opened. The serious side of the work has been shown." So it seems the Yankee touts and gamblers who have come over to us to make racing attractive, are engaged in a grand, noble and patriotic work for the strength and glory of the Empire, and the betterment of the race. Ah, hem! Appearances are deceiving!

Denmark is a prosperous little country, ruled by peasant-farmers, ninety per cent. of whom own their own holdings. The farms are small, but worked like gardens. The State owns the railways, and makes them serve the farmers. Education bears directly on the farm. The State loans money for the purchase of farms. Co-operation has minimized outlay and given the producer a fuller return for his bacon and butter and poultry products. Illiteracy is gone, and extreme poverty reduced to a minimum. It being a free-trade country, the cost of living is low. It buys where it can to best advantage, and sells its highly-finished farm products abroad.

For one Garfield or Lincoln, or Hill, there are hundreds who left farms in boyhood days, and never attained a position equal to that of the average farmer. With more reading, more thinking, and more planning, the average condition and contentment of the farmer can be made higher than the present average. Perhaps for those whose aims are fame and fortune, a withdrawal from the farm would be best, both for them and the farming industry. For those who esteem good-living, character, and the solid satisfaction that comes of acquiring an adequate, fairly-earned competence through the production of wealth direct from nature, agriculture is the sanest and best occupation of all.

Why Living is Dear.

During the past few weeks public attention has been turned in a very pointed manner to the steadily-increasing cost of living; that is to say, the increasing cost as measured by currency, which, as we have previously pointed out, is a variable commodity, rising and falling in value as the supply of precious metal in the world decreases, or augments in volume relatively to the demand for it. When gold becomes comparatively plentiful, the tendency is to decrease the amount of other products that can be purchased with a given quantity of it; hence gold is cheapened, while prices (of other products) rise. This is hard on the man who lives on the interest of his money, hard on the person working for a certain wage or salary, hard on all those who have to depend on fixed income. It is probably correspondingly advantageous to certain other classes, but the net effect is to disturb economic conditions and adjustments, entailing hardship here and there.

But there are many other factors bearing on the problem. One is the advancing standard of living. What were once rare luxuries to the masses are now regarded as everyday necessities. Choicer food, including more meat (and notably a more general demand for the select cuts), more tropical fruit, and a greatly increased consumption in the cities of expensive greenhouse products, are a few items that will suffice to illustrate this point. More good clothing, especially for ordinary wear, and for children, is also bought. In our houses, many of us enjoy such advantages as furnaces and other heating systems; gas, electric or acetylene light; conveniently-piped water supply, plumbing and sewage disposal; more light, more ventilation, more sanitary conditions, more convenience, and more gratification of the aesthetic sense. On the farm we have much more machinery, some of it economical in its saving of labor, some chiefly designed to promote ease and leisure. We rest more, travel more, and have more recreation. All these things tend to counteract the condition of abundance that should result from the economy wrought by invention, causing increases of prices in some lines of production, and preventing decreases in others.

Increased cost of doing business is another factor that has been stealthily creeping upon us. For example, take the retail business. To be successful, a store-keeper must keep up a "front." He must first of all secure a good stand; this costs considerably for rent, and rents are increasing as cities grow. He must advertise liberally, keep an attractive store, and hire well-paid, well-dressed clerks. He must keep his shelves filled with new and fashionable goods. By the way, fashion has a great deal to answer for in raising the cost of living. All these things must be done, or he will drop behind in the race of competition. Yet, all these things constitute charges that must be met; they directly affect the retail price that must be set upon the goods. Fortunately, the advent of the cash system, and the increasing business resulting from growth of population, tend to offset the increasing charges named above, but these two latter influences should be producing a decrease in the necessary margin of doing business. Take insurance, banking, manufacturing. Who pays the princely salaries, who erects the palatial buildings that adorn city corners, and who meets the rental of the increasingly valuable sites they occupy? The consumer or patrons of the institutions every time. The price charged for goods, the interest paid on

deposits, and the discount rate on loans, are all fixed with a view to meeting such charges, and then paying a profit on top of that. True, as stated above, the most successful businesses are often those that maintain appearances, just as a promoter or stock-broker often finds it good business to live in extravagant style; but it all comes out of the consumer's or patron's pocket in the end. Could we only arrive at the annual rental value of real estate in the business sections of our Canadian cities, the amount would be staggering. Who gets all that? The lucky landlord. Who pays it? The consumer—the general public.

But, we hear someone object, the advances recently complained of have been in meats, eggs, and farm produce. Yes, but did you ever reflect how sensitively the farmer's business and position is affected by that of other classes? Have you realized that tariffs and bounties which build up vast manufacturing industries in our cities, at the primary expense of farmers, must decrease the numbers and hamper the operations of the men upon the land? Artificially-enhanced cost of living on the farm tends directly and inevitably to restrict the farmer's production and increase the price of his products as sold in the cities. The pronounced cityward drift of population in America has been partly due to this very cause. Economic conditions readjust themselves in time; the very course meant to build cities ultimately reacts, in a measure, at least, to their detriment. Thus, the agricultural population of America, and, for that matter, of the world, is barely sufficient to feed the population, and a hint of scarcity sends prices bounding, particularly for the coveted choice articles of diet. Moreover, the increased cost of doing business, spoken of above, accounts for an increasingly wide space between the price of cattle and the retail price of beef, as indicated in U. S. Secretary Wilson's annual report, which sets forth that the cattle-feeder was getting little more for his products than a decade since, while the breeder of the cattle got no more at all.

Another fact: The system of education in this country has tended to alienate the interest of the people from the land, and, together with economic conditions, has reduced the numbers, detracted from the enterprise and lessened the success of the people on the land. This is now being glimmeringly recognized, and material change may be expected within the next quarter or half century.

We leave economists to wrestle with certain other abstruse considerations of an international character. Some of them hold, for instance, though others dispute it, that cheap labor in China and other Oriental countries, and its relation to the silver coinage, has the effect of lessening the buying power of gold in the newer countries of the world, and that until China and other countries begin to live better, prices will continue to go up. Others dispute this view. However this may be, there is in America a present local shortage of foodstuffs, and local remedies will not be without avail.

Personal thrift, not boycott, is to be recommended to the poor consumer. Steady reduction in tariff imposts will help; judicious economy in government; public ownership of municipal real estate and of public utilities (where opportunity presents, and as the people become educated to responsibility); co-operation in some instances, bringing producer and consumer together; removal of costly and hampering exactions from city markets; effort, on the farmer's part to study economy of production; labor-saving methods and improved practice, are other suggestions which, if acted upon, would contribute to individual and general well-being.